

November 21, 1962

Letter from Dutch Embassy, Havana (Boissevain), 21 November 1962

Citation:

"Letter from Dutch Embassy, Havana (Boissevain), 21 November 1962", November 21, 1962, Wilson Center Digital Archive, National Archives, The Hague, Archives of the Dutch Legation (later Embassy) in Cuba, 1955-1964, 2.05.169, inv. 82. Obtained for CWIHP by Rimko van der Maar and translated for CWIHP by Bastiaan Bouwman.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/115571>

Summary:

Boissevain writes how nationalistic fervor is at the fever pitch in Cuba. He comments on widespread use of slogans and propaganda posters everywhere in Havana and the effects they have on the average Cuban. Despite the end of the military blockade against Cuba, tensions still run high between Castro and Kennedy. The island is now "completely isolated" resulting in severe shipping delays from Europe, if any arrive at all.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Dutch

Contents:

Translation - English

2517/585.

Havana, 21 November 1962.

C U B A:

Politics.

This is the country of heroic postures and noble slogans. When one sees a notice at a workshop, factory, or agricultural enterprise: "we support Fidel's five points" or "we will increase production in fraternal competition with x," then it seems as if Mario, Pedro, and Ramón have been asked for their opinion and this has been put into writing. In reality of course the reverse is true. Mario, Pedro, and Ramón are reading - as far as they are able to read - what they are supposed to be thinking.

Since Fidel has brought in the Spartan mothers (he had read a book again) tensions have been rising because of the lack of a satisfactory settlement of the dispute. Now that President Kennedy has ended the "quarantine" the motto is: 1st no indiscretion about military affairs; 2nd despite the end of the illegal blockade, keep the powder dry or as it is literally called: "la guardia en alto."

In the meantime the island has become almost completely isolated and already practice has shown that orders in Europe cannot be shipped or are received with considerable delays.

This does not however keep the revolutionary government from participating in popular movements elsewhere and the attached badge¹ proves this.

The Ambassador,

G.W. Boissevain.

[i] Not further identified - ed.